



# God Forgives David

2 Samuel 11:1–12:10; Psalm 51:1-12

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## David Stays Home

David didn't maintain a large year-round army. At that time, the world was largely agrarian, and farmers had to mind their crops at certain times of the year. So after the grain harvest in April and May, the farmer-soldiers were able to fight with the army, making the spring, especially late spring, a convenient time for war.

Although his soldiers went out to battle, it wasn't necessary or wise for David to risk his life to do so. Instead he directed the fighting through messengers sent back and forth between him and Joab, his general.

## David's Eyes Get Him in Trouble

David's walk on the roof was not unusual. Bathsheba was likely bathing herself as part of the purification ritual required after menstruation. The comment in 2 Samuel 11:4 that Bathsheba had just purified herself from her "uncleanness" (menstruation) establishes that she was not made pregnant by her husband, Uriah, because he was away fighting in the war.

## David Covers Up His Sin

In summoning Uriah home from the war, David hoped that Uriah would sleep with Bathsheba so that later, when the baby was born, no one would suspect that the baby wasn't Uriah's. It may seem odd that Uriah steadfastly refused to sleep with his wife, but in fact it was not unusual for Israelite soldiers to take a vow of sexual abstinence during times of war. They felt it was wrong to indulge their own pleasures while their fellow soldiers were fighting.

## Nathan Confronts David

Although Nathan was a prophet, it took tremendous courage for him to confront David about his sin.

Remember that David had already killed once to cover up his sin with Bathsheba. What was to stop him from killing again to cover up the sin of killing Uriah? In spite of that possibility, Nathan did what God sent him to do.

Nathan's prophecy came true: David and Bathsheba's firstborn son died, David's son Absalom incited a rebellion against him in which David was driven from Jerusalem, and Absalom slept with David's concubines.

## David Asks for—and Receives—God's Forgiveness

David eloquently proclaims his remorse and repentance in Psalm 51. David's sin devastated him and his kingdom, but he sought forgiveness in one of the most beautiful psalms of contrition ever written. His plea for cleansing is an example for us all.

## The Jesus Connection

Sin separates each of us from God, but Jesus reunites us through his death and resurrection. Through him we have new life and the chance to repent and begin again!

Reread Psalm 51. When was the last time you felt that kind of remorse for sin?

Thank Jesus for the beauty of being cleansed from sin. Without his sacrifice, we would be lost forever. You can write your prayer here.

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**God Forgives David**—2 Samuel 11:1–12:10; Psalm 51:1–12

► **Bible Point**—God wants us to repent when we sin.

**Key Verse**—“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

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DEEPER

## Talk Topics

- Tell about a time you committed a sin and felt really bad until you confessed it to God. How did things change afterward?
- Discuss what you can do to make confession of your sins to God a regular part of your life.
- Talk about the effect of not confessing our sins to God.

## Daily Challenges

Choose one or more of these activities to do this week.

- Consider something in your life you'd like to come clean about with God, and find a trusted Christian friend or leader to confess it to. Sometimes confessing to people makes it easier to confess to God—as well as experience God's forgiveness in a very tangible way.
- At the end of each day, review how your day went and any sins you may have committed, either intentionally or unintentionally. Ask God's forgiveness where you need to, and make a point of apologizing or restoring things as you need to. Think of other ways you can make confession and repentance a part of your daily life.
- Share with a friend how you've experienced God's forgiveness in your life, and let your friend know that he or she can give his or her sins to God, too.

## Through the Week

Use the following passages to explore additional biblical perspectives on confession and forgiveness.

### Monday—Luke 24:46-47

- How did Christ's life and death bring you forgiveness?

### Tuesday—Acts 10:43

- What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

### Wednesday—Matthew 6:14-15

- Why does God want us to forgive others as freely as he forgives us?

### Thursday—Luke 5:17-20

- How do you think the paralyzed man felt when Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven”? How would you feel if you were in the paralyzed man's place?

### Friday—Psalm 86:5-7

- Why do you think God wants to forgive us?

### Saturday—Matthew 6:9-13

- What are some things you need to ask God's forgiveness for today?

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